



**United Cerebral Palsy
of Central Ohio**

440 Industrial Mile Rd.
Columbus, Ohio
43228-2411
(614) 279-0109
(614) 279-2527 FAX
ucpofcentralohio.org

Adult Day Program
Employment Program
In-Home Program
Assistive Technology

Adult Day Centers:

Grace Kindig ADC
440 Industrial Mile Road
Columbus, Ohio 43228
(614) 279-0109

Reese ADC
123 South 3rd Street
Newark, Ohio 43055
(740) 345-4771



UCP of Central Ohio
is a CARF accredited
United Way Agency.

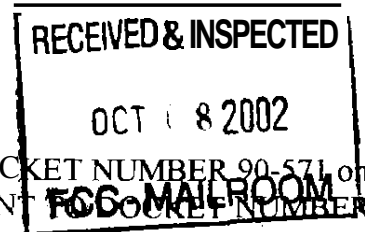
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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

Office of the Secretary of the FCC
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

September 25, 2002

Subject "EX PARTE COMMENT FOR DOCKET NUMBER 90-571 on
NECA FUNDS" and "EX PARTE COMMENT FOR DOCKET NUMBER
98-67 ON TRS/STS OUTREACH"



Dear Secretary:

I live in Ohio and I am pleased that the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) of Ohio made telephones accessible to people with speech disabilities by providing Speech to Speech. I **STRONGLY URGE THE PUC TO ESTABLISH AN EFFECTIVE STS OUTREACH SERVICE.**

In Ohio, people with speech disabilities have dramatically improved their lives because of the increasing availability of assistive technology. The availability of STS would have a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities served by United Cerebral Palsy of Central Ohio. A majority of the people with disabilities experience the frustration of their speech and communication not being understood by the general public. People with disabilities face challenges in communicating in their everyday lives. STS services would eliminate one barrier people with disabilities must overcome.

Providing outreach appropriate to people with speech disabilities is an essential part of access. When people with speech disabilities have appropriate training to use STS, they become more independent, participate more in the community, get jobs etc. The new relay regulations require states and relay providers to contract such that relay is accessible to users with speech disabilities.

If the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio provides STS without appropriate outreach, call volumes will be extremely low. Call volumes could rise substantially with an extensive STS outreach service tailored to people with speech disabilities. Providing appropriate outreach for STS **will** help Ohio residents with speech disabilities enter the mainstream of life.

Because I want this independence for people with speech disabilities in Ohio, I strongly urge the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to provide an STS outreach service similar to the very successful STS intensive outreach services in California, Minnesota and Maryland.

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You see people. We see promise.



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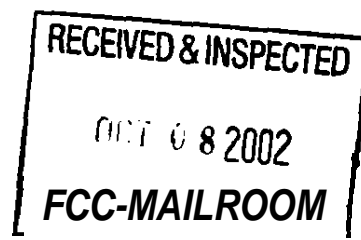
Based on Minnesota's budgetary experience, such a service may cost \$288,000 annually based on Ohio's population. Many states have sufficient surcharge money to fund a STS outreach service without difficulty. Vocational rehabilitation client services money may be available to teach people to use **STS** as it fosters independence and makes people job **ready**.

A large proportion of people with speech disabilities have other disabilities as well; this makes it very difficult for them to advocate for themselves. Therefore, it is necessary for the rest of us to insure that services like STS outreach are adequately provided for.

Again, I strongly urge the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to budget for an effective **STS** outreach service with an annual budget of \$288,000.

Sincerely,

Kathy Streblo
Kathy Streblo
Executive Director



cc: Disability Rights Office
Consumer Information Bureau
Federal Communications Commission Room 6C-447
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

cc: Beth Blackmer
Public Interest Center
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
180 E. Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215-3793

cc: Michael E. Fingerhut, General Anomy
Sprint Corporation
401 9th Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20004

cc: Kristine Shipley, Program Manager
Sprint Relay
One Metro Place, 545 Metro Place So., Suite 100,
Dublin, Ohio 43017

cc: Bob Segalman, Ph.D.
Department of Rehabilitation
Att: Program Evaluation
2000 Evergreen Street
Sacramento, CA 95815

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